



Spies, Espionage, and Covert Operations: From Ancient Greece to the Cold War

Michael Rank

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From the #1 bestselling author of *History's Greatest Generals* comes an exciting new book on the greatest spies in history and how their acts of espionage and covert operations changed the course of history.

Whether it is Aeneas Tacticus, who created Western military science; Francis Walsingham, Queen Elizabeth's spymaster who foiled numerous assassination attempts and forged an international spy network at the dawn of European colonialism; or Richard Sorge, the hard-drinking German spy for the Soviets whose interception of Axis military intelligence prevented the Russian army's collapse in World War II, each of these spies had a major impact on modern society.

This book will explore the lives and times of the ten greatest spies, or spy networks, in history. Some have taken on legendary status, such as Mata Hari, the World War One-era exotic dancer and courtesan who shared the bed chambers of so many French and German officers that she couldn't help but become a double agent. Others spied for pure ideological conviction, such as George Koval, the Iowa-born spy who leaked American nuclear secrets to the Soviet Union, accelerating Russia's nuclear program by years and making the Cold War arm's race possible. Still others have attained a near-religious level of adoration -- Nathan Hale, the Revolutionary War-era spy, had a very short career but became America's first martyr and a treasured national symbol.

Whatever their reason for espionage, these spies represented the invisible hand of government power. Their lives were shrouded in mystery -- and many had backgrounds so convoluted that we still do not know their true loyalties, if they ever had any. But despite their enigmatic lives, they were the invisible hand that helped direct the course of history.

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